

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, number one hypocrite

Statement by
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October 4, 2003

Macapagal-Arroyo is a foremost hypocrite for saying that she has been forced to change her mind due to "a higher cause" and make a "huge sacrifice" in accepting the decision to run in 2004. Her brazen mendacity before the people who suffer tremendously from her regime's puppetry, militarism, corruption and inutility is execrable. The Filipino people are painfully aware of the enormous privileges that Arroyo and her cohorts in power enjoy as she sits in Malacañang.

There is nothing new or surprising about Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's announcement of her decision to run in the coming 2004 polls. The entire country has long known about her addiction to the power she has thoroughly benefited from.

Thus, her erstwhile allies who know how to think have turned their backs on her. The truth is that it is Arroyo who cannot turn her back on the millions of pesos she and her husband have appropriated from corruption and huge business privileges. She cannot turn away from the whisperings of her god US President George W. Bush whom she blindly worships



and serves, even as his own position has also become shaky.

And what will the Filipino people gain from Arroyo's desire to remain in power for another six years? Undoubtedly, it will bring more poverty and further suffering to the Filipino people. It will mean worse cases of corruption and more indulgences for

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the Arroyos, their children and cohorts. It will be tantamount to intensified puppetry to US imperialism and the exacerbation of state terrorist violence and military brutality against the people.

Arroyo's announcement will surely be met by the people's all-out resistance. As far as the people are concerned, Arroyo's close to three years in power is already insufferably long, considering the gravity and number of the problems that have weighed heavily on their shoulders under her regime.

The people seethe with anger. "Run, Gloria, run! Out, Gloria, Out! Get out of Malacañang!" This is the cry of a people gnawed by hunger; of the unemployed; of those who live hand-to-mouth; of the youth who cannot go to school; of students painfully conscious of oppression and poverty; of ordinary teachers and employees; of restive soldiers; of businessmen going bankrupt. It is the cry of the Filipino people!

Arroyo has betrayed EDSA 2. The cases of corruption involving her family, closest friends and political coterie are as foul-smelling as the grand-scale corruption cases of the despised and ousted Estrada regime. Even as the ruling clique wallows in lucre, not once did it raise the wages of workers and ordinary employees. It has consigned land reform to oblivion and has instead paved the way for large-scale landgrabbing by big landlords and foreign corporations and the reconcentration of land ownership in the hands of landlords, usurers and the comprador bourgeoisie.

Arroyo has betrayed the national interest. She has auctioned off the nation's sovereignty just to pander to the desires of her imperialist master and his armed troops. She has further laid bare the economy to rapacious plunder by big foreign capitalists.

Arroyo has betrayed democracy and peace! She has scuttled peace



talks with the National Democratic Front and junked all signed agreements. She has made way for the will of the militarists in accordance with US imperialism's "anti-terrorist" doctrine. Demonstrations have been violently suppressed. Those who express themselves are forcibly silenced.

The people will surely repudiate Gloria Arroyo in 2004—that is, if she even lasts till then. The people have manifested their extreme loathing for her, even as they have not much to choose from.

Only a miracle wrought by massive fraud, violence, bribery and maneuvers by the US can make her win the 2004 elections. Nonetheless, it is the perpetuation and exacerbation of the policies and measures she has been enforcing that will precipitate a worsening of the national economic and political crisis, rock her regime and ignite more intense and widespread people's resistance. Arroyo's obstinacy to remain in power will all the more challenge the people to overthrow her regime, and in the process, further weaken the entire ruling system. AB

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Assert and defend the people's legal and democratic struggle

The violent and severe repression of the struggling people by the reactionary state and other fascist forces has been occurring in rapid succession and is on the rise.

Just recently, several more have been added to the long list of victims of repression by the AFP and its paramilitary forces with the brutal murder of four youth activists in Compostela Valley, Mindanao and the abduction of another activist in Cebu. (See related article)

Prior to this, the killings of journalists critical of the corruption, decadence and violence of the reactionary government and bureaucracy, opportunist politicians, military leaders, criminal syndicates and other elements that ravage and rule society had already become striking.

The worsening fascist terror indicates the fascists' desperation to repress the intensifying people's struggle. The reactionary state and the fascist forces under the current leadership of President Arroyo have become increasingly intolerant of workers, peasants and other oppressed and exploited sectors. In the main, the most violent fascist attacks have been directed at the legal democratic forces that dare expose and criticize the severe governmental, state and societal oppression, rottenness and inutility they have witnessed, and persist in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people. The regime fears greatly the actions taken by the democratic forces to expose the most recent and serious cases detailing Malacañang's brazenly shameless

and large-scale corruption, and to call for Gloria Arroyo's ouster.

As a result of the AFP's failure to stem the growing strength of the revolutionary armed struggle, it now trains its guns and cannons on unarmed civilians and activists, rationalizing its human rights violations with the oft-repeated line that its targets are mere "communist fronts."

The present regime and its US imperialist master know no bounds in their ambition to unleash repression. They have continuously and repeatedly attempted and maneuvered to have fascist measures, such as the National ID system and counter-terrorism bills legislated.

In the face of these developments, the revolutionaries and democratic forces and the mass media, among others, must pay close attention to and daringly expose and denounce the fascist state and its butchers, especially the masterminds of unabashed fascist terrorism whose aim is to cower the people and force the retreat of the people's struggle. We must continuously call on the people not to remain silent but to instead turn grief to courage and resistance and to take measures to strengthen the protest movement against fascism and reaction. There is need to step up our determination and vigor to arouse, organize and mobilize the broad masses of the people. We must encourage the youth to root themselves more broadly and more deeply among their fellow youth and the masses of the people. We



must also pay particular attention to mobilizing the middle forces and enlisting their assistance.

We must likewise be ever vigilant in order to resist and prevent measures that may lead to the imposition of open fascist rule. We must persevere in the struggle to bring down this repressive regime and eventually overthrow the entire fascist state and reactionary system and realize a genuinely democratic, pro-people and independent people's government.

Along with being a manifestation of the democratic forces and the people's heightened indignation and protests, the intensification of terrorism by state and fascist forces also brings about the advance of the people's revolutionary armed resistance. In fact, intensified fascist terror likewise indicates how far the struggle between revolution and counterrevolution has developed and the extent to which the regime and the fascist forces fear the growing strength of revolutionary armed resistance. The Arroyo regime and the fascists themselves are teaching a growing number of people that there is no hope under the ruling system. The ruling system's unrestrained cruelty and violence push the people to take the road of revolutionary social change. As fascist terror intensifies, more and more people join and support the armed revolution.



Massacre of four activists in Compostela Valley strongly condemned

The emotions of members of Anakbayan and the Anak ng Bayan and Anakpawis parties seethed like the hot sun on the afternoon of September 26 as they rallied in front of the city hall of Tagum, Davao del Norte and strongly condemned the Arroyo regime and the military for the recent abduction, torture and brutal slaying of four youths.

Activists Marjorie Reynoso, 18; Jonathan Benaro, 16; Lito Doydoy, 27; and Ramon Regase, 17, the driver of the motorcycle they were riding on, were on their way to the town of Maco, Compostela Valley on September 19 when they were abducted by the military. They were stopped near the Hijo Plantation in Apokon, Davao del Norte, merely 50 meters from a PNP detachment. Five armed men with their faces masked forced them into a Tamaraw FX van. Witnesses say two of the young men were shot in the legs while attempting to escape.

Merardo Arce Command (New People's Army-southern Mindanao) spokesperson Rigoberto Sanchez exposed the abduction and murder of the four youths as the handiwork of the military's Intelligence Security Unit (ISU). Sanchez said the operation was

led by a Capt. Denmark Mamaril and involved a 1st Sgt. Roy Telang and certain Adan Marcus, both intelligence operatives. The military brought the four youths to a safehouse in Trento, Agusan del Sur.

RAPED, TORTURED. At around 12 noon on September 23, a worker and a guard stumbled upon the bodies of the four youths in Area 307 of Selecta Farm in Barangay Osmeña, Compostela. According to the police investigation, the victims were tortured before being killed.

The victims' bodies indeed bore torture marks. There were indications that Reynoso, Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) chairperson of Barangay Anislagan and Anak ng Bayan municipal coordinator in Maco, was raped. Masking tape residues were found over her mouth. A bullet shattered her skull. Benaro, an SK councilor of Barangay Mapaang and a member of Anak ng Bayan and Doydoy, an Anakbayan organizer, and even the driver Regase, had rope markings around their necks and stab wounds in various parts of their bodies. They were buried practically naked in a shallow grave.

According to KARAPATAN-Southern Mindanao, the abduction and murder of these militant youths is clearly meant to harass, terrorize and silence progressive and patriotic organizations critical of the government.

Anakbayan-Southern Mindanao also condemned the military's

close surveillance, harassment and intimidation of leaders and members of their organization. Lt. Col. Agane Adriatico, chief of the Civil Relations Group of the Philippine Army in southeastern Mindanao himself admitted their surveillance of the youth. However, he was hard-pressed denying that the military was involved in the "salvaging" (summary execution) of the four youths, and instead ridiculously hurled the accusation at the New People's Army.

MORE AND MORE YOUTH ARE RISING IN RESISTANCE. This heinous crime manifests the Macapagal-Arroyo regime's intense fear of the militant youth, said Kabataang Makabayan spokesperson Andres Guerrero II. "In reality, the Arroyo regime fears the continuous growth of the revolutionary movement to which more and more youth have been giving their all-out support," said Guerrero.

Meanwhile, Communist Party of the Philippines spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said that the Arroyo regime has been venting its anger on the youth who have been joining the NPA in their numbers. This tactic, he says, will backfire on the Arroyo government because more and more youth are joining the revolutionary movement and the NPA in the areas where the terrorist all-out war is being launched.

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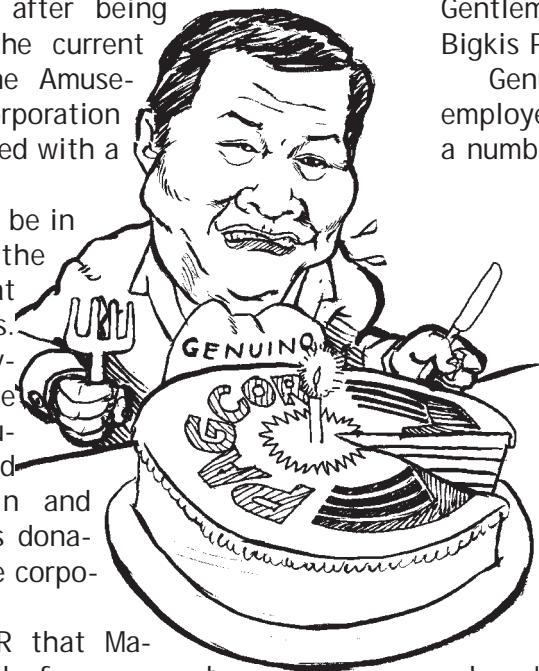
Multi-million peso thievery in PAGCOR

Another milking cow of the ruling classes has gone bankrupt after being plundered by the current regime. The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) is now saddled with a P1.4 billion debt.

PAGCOR should not be in hock because of the amount of money that pours into its coffers. But its officials' extravagant lifestyle, the bloated number of superfluous officials and employees brought in and corruption disguised as donations have plunged the corporation deep in debt.

It is from PAGCOR that Malacañang sources funds for supposed projects of the president and other government agencies. It is also one of the principal fund sources for the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Philippine Sports Commission. Because of the enormity of its funds and the corporation's relative laxity in providing financial assistance and doleouts, it has become a traditional milking cow for all reactionary regimes. Besides, PAGCOR is exempted from scrutiny by the Commission on Audit.

Thus, one of Arroyo's first measures shortly after assuming power was to appoint to PAGCOR Ephraim Genuino, a loyal and reliable operator of the Arroyo



family, as well as other officials close to First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and their front party, Bigkis Pinoy.

Genuino immediately brought into PAGCOR 2,000 employees and over a hundred consultants, including a number of journalists. They began drawing monthly salaries ranging from P10,000

to P50,000 a month. The consultants' combined monthly salaries came to P2.5 million. In addition, PAGCOR's expenses for "bonuses and other benefits" ballooned from P18 million in 2000 to P86 million in 2002.

Aside from this, since 2001, PAGCOR has spent P120 million on a hundred additional luxury vehicles. The agency's heads shamelessly provided themselves "benefits" to buy expensive cars. As head of PAGCOR, Genuino was allowed to purchase a P2.5 million car while board members were each allowed cars worth P2 million.

Genuino attempted to cover up this anomaly by preventing its exposure in the media. An exposé by the television program *Probe Team* was put on hold after the regime threatened to withdraw all government commercials from GMA-7 that would have meant a 6% reduction in the station's revenues. The *Probe Team*'s report was aired only several weeks later, after other media people and many citizens rose in protest against the muzzling of press freedom. AB

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BAYAN MUNA COORDINATOR

ABDUCTED. Even as demonstrators in Tagum City denounced the military and the police for the brutal kidnapping and summary execution of the four activists, the regional coordinator of Bayan Muna in Central Visayas was abducted that same night by elements of the Regional Intelligence and Investigation Division (RIID).

He was on his way home to Mandaue City when he was waylaid

by two RIID agents and forced into a van. Taken to a safehouse in Lapu-Lapu City, his captors tried to convince him to turn informer for the RIID. He was interrogated about Bayan Muna activities and about persons they believed to be NDF and NPA leaders in the region. When his captors left him alone in the safehouse on September 27, the victim had an opportunity to call a Bayan Muna lawyer, who went to the safehouse to pick him up.

Meanwhile, the Bagong Alyan-

sang Makabayan (BAYAN)-Panay and Provincial Board Member Cesar Talabucon of Capiz assailed Maj. Oscar Lasangue of the AFP Civil Relations Group when he linked BAYAN, Bayan Muna and Talabucon himself to the revolutionary movement's activities. BAYAN said that such baseless and malicious accusations by the military are meant to condition the minds of the people to accept the intensifying military offensives against the legal democratic movement and its personalities. AB



In the Ilocos-Cordillera region

NPA assails AFP lies

The NPA in Ilocos-Cordillera refuted the AFP's lies and psywar in the region. In two separate statements, the NPA said that the military has been resorting to prevarications, what with no victories to show, and to cover up the human rights violations it has committed.

According to the Jennifer "Maria" Cariño Command (JMCC) of the NPA in Benguet, the AFP has accused the NPA of stealing P20 million worth of gold bars and killing five miners, including an engineer, in Lepanto, Mankayan on September 20. The JMCC refuted such claims, saying that the NPA does not resort to criminal acts just to raise funds. It neither steals or engages in corruption, unlike the AFP, and it certainly does not cultivate marijuana just to finance the revolution, said JMCC spokesperson Ka Sey-ang Rayos. The JMCC also strongly condemned the murder of an inno-

cent civilian in Tabbac, Bulalacao, Mankayan, and the 54th IB and PNP's violation of the human rights of Mankayan residents after the robbery.

Meanwhile, the Leonardo Pacsi Command (LPC) of the NPA in Mountain Province refuted the AFP's claims of having killed 11 Red fighters, capturing two large camps and confiscating valuable documents in an AFP operation in the province from July 19 to September 2. According to LPC spokesperson Ka Magno Udyaw, only one comrade was killed in the fighting. The camps mentioned had long been abandoned and no documents were found by the soldiers.

The LPC condemned the murder by the AFP of Etfew Chadyaas, a peasant from Belwang, Sedanga who the soldiers had merely chanced upon, walking along a path, and who was later exhibited as an NPA member. The military

operation which lasted more than a month, wrought extreme hardships on the people. The LPC said that the operation distressed farm animals, destroyed sources of water and prevented peasants from harvesting their crops for a prolonged period, resulting in the spoilage of their farm products. The AFP also violated the ritual of *tengaw* that the masses of Bontoc were performing at the time. Soldiers even stole rice from the peasants' storage barns in Mainit and slaughtered a carabao for meat.

The LPC called on the soldiers and CAFGU anew not to allow themselves to be used as instruments of violence against their fellow oppressed during military operations. The LPC said that it would be better for them to emulate the example of their fellow soldiers from the 502nd Bde who went AWOL in August in the middle of one such operation. AB

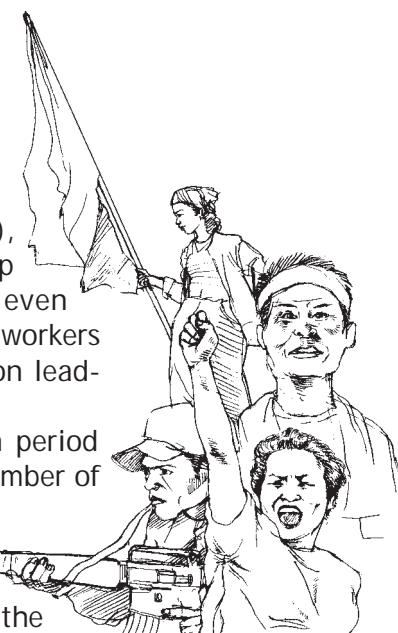
Revolutionary unionism expands, gains strength

Since the Second National Conference of the Revolutionary Workers' Movement was held in September 1998, the revolutionary workers' movement has continuously reaped successes especially in Party building and consolidation. According to comrades under the National Organization Department (NOD), this is the concrete result of the correct policies and tasks set in 1998.

Together with intensively organizing workers for the revolution (culminating in the establishment of revolutionary unions

and Party branches in factories), comrades have also stepped up organizing work among the even greater number of non-unionized workers as well as those under yellow union leaders or federations.

Within the three-year program period outlined by the conference, the number of Party members and union activists grew by 300%. From 1998 up to the end of 2002, the number of unions under the department increased by 70%.



This rapid rate of development continues up to the present. Currently, 60% of unions covered by the NOD are either revolutionary unions or are in various levels of development towards becoming revolutionary unions. A union can be considered revolutionary when a significant number of its members have been recruited into the Party. It is likewise able to launch



local struggles to improve the economic conditions and assert the democratic rights of its members.

The aforementioned revolutionary unions under the NOD are likewise active in the struggle against the state's anti-worker, anti-union and anti-strike offensive. They also actively participate in mobilizations against intensifying fascism and US military intervention, and are conscious of their role in advancing the people's democratic revolution.

Party building. At present, no limit is set by the NOD on how many members a Party branch could have. Although there are

small branches that have less than 15 members, branches usually have over 30 members. In one of the most developed factories under the NOD, over 60% of the workers are Party branch members.

Based on the last five years' experience, building the Party and the underground revolutionary movement has proceeded apace. The key to such success is firm compliance with the resolutions on solid organizing adopted during the conference. In one factory, for example, a Party branch and an underground movement was organized within a mere three months from the time contact with the workers was established. In five more months, the number of Party members grew six-fold.

Tempered by experience. Organizing in the factory grew more rapidly as the workers were tempered in an intense struggle to defend their union rights.

The workers had tried several times to organize a union but failed each time because they happened to link up with yellow federations. They only succeeded in forming a genuine, militant and patriotic union after a militant federation established contact with them.

The capitalist, however, also reacted swiftly. Noticing the workers' initial steps to form a union, he tried to set up a runaway shop by bringing out all his machinery to operate them elsewhere. The workers did not yield. They barricaded all entrances and exits until the capitalist had no choice but to negotiate with them. The capitalist has since recognized the union and negotiations for a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) are currently taking place.

Struggle against yellow unionism. In another factory, the

workers launched a struggle to break free from the clutches of a yellow federation. The workers had been trying for years to oust their yellow leaders.

The workers were further steeled in the process of waging an intense struggle. The number of activists belonging to underground groups grew. Within three months, a regular-size Party branch had also been set up. Its membership more than doubled after three more months. Organizing work is now being conducted among daily and monthly wage workers, supervisors, and even factory guards. A large branch now directs the Party work of the various branch groups in the factory.

The number of Party members has grown large enough for the branch to carry out tasks outside the factory. Most of them organize in nearby factories and in surrounding communities.

Support for the armed struggle. One of the branches and revolutionary unions' main tasks is to support the armed struggle. Each branch has adopted a guerrilla front to support in regions that need help the most. They continuously gather material support, including guns, ammunition and other military equipment. But the revolutionary workers' movement's most important contribution is the scores of new fighters it deploys to the New People's Army every year.

Recently, a large number out of the hundreds of contractual workers fired from their jobs decided to go to the countryside and join the NPA.

These are but two of the many factories throughout the archipelago from which the Party and the revolutionary movement draw their basic strength.

Tribal wars and *bodong* in the Cordillera

In recent years, there has been a spate of tribal wars in the Cordillera due to the instigation of reactionary politicians, military and paramilitary forces and criminal syndicates in the region.

There is the unmistakable provocation and escalation by the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (or CPLA, a counterrevolutionary group that has become a paramilitary force of the AFP and PNP) of the long-standing feud between the Butbut tribe in Tinglayan, Kalinga and the Betwagan tribe in Sadanga, Mt. Province. In order to expand its illegal logging operations and marijuana cultivation, the CPLA, which is primarily based in Tinglayan, has intruded into Betwagan territory.

The eruption of tribal wars has also become more frequent because the Local Government Code has been pushing tribes, villages and towns to expand their territories in order to increase their Internal Revenue Allotment.

War and *bodong*. Tribal war is a primitive means of forcibly resolving conflicts between tribes based on the concept of "a tooth for a tooth" until parity is achieved or until one side has firmly maintained a decisive advantage over the other.

Whenever war breaks out between tribes, everybody—young and old, men and women—is mobilized in various aspects of the conflict—from stocking up food supplies, setting up a system of defense, procuring arms and ammunition, going on sentry duty, undertaking reconnaissance of the movements of the enemy tribe up to carrying out attacks and retreating. All members of the tribes in conflict, even the innocent and the defenseless, are targets of attack wherever they may be.

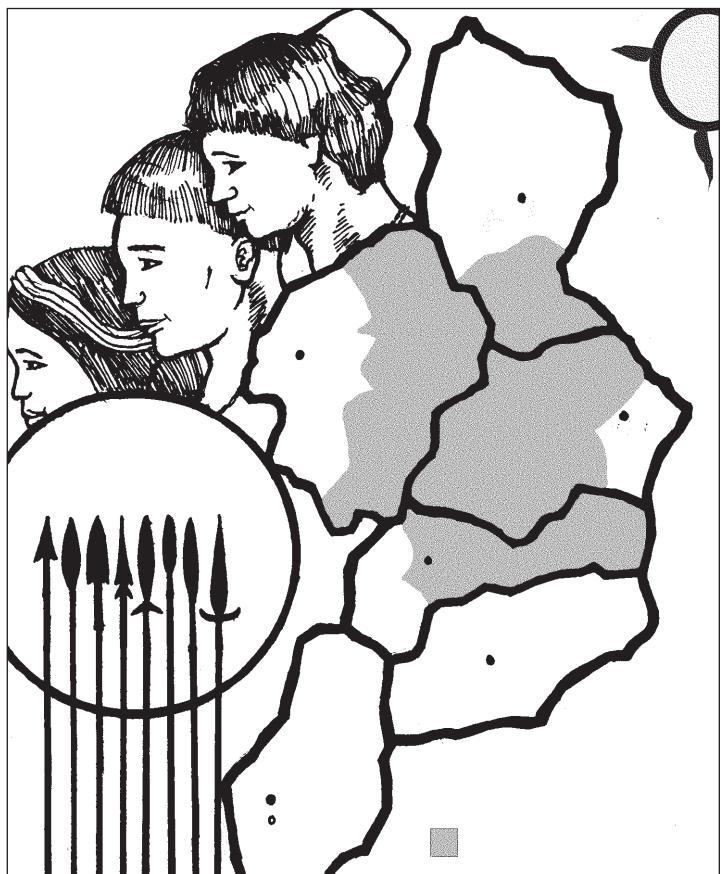
The *bodong*, on the other hand, is a tribal institution aimed at stopping tribal wars, ensuring the protection of each tribe, and establishing a peaceful alliance. It comes in the form of a clear agreement between two tribes concerning matters important to both, including questions of land, resources and territorial boundaries, life, livelihood, property, justice and the honor of the warring tribes.

Through *bodong*, the various issues under contention or that need to be addressed through cooperation by the *binodngan* (communities carrying out *bodong*) are resolved. In principle and in practice, the Party and the NPA actively participate in stopping

tribal wars and in influencing and guiding the forging and upholding of *bodong*. They ensure that the NPA as the army of the entire people and the armed forces of the reactionary state as the enemy of the entire people never get involved in tribal wars. The Party and the NPA actively pursue a just peace between tribes and among the people in order to direct the people's struggle against the reactionary ruling classes who are the real enemies of the people. This is in accordance with the principle that contradictions among the people are secondary and non-antagonistic.

The issues causing tribal conflicts may be resolved through peaceful and democratic means, including the use of indigenous methods such as *tungtongan* and amicable settlements. To achieve the immediate and strategic cessation of tribal wars, the revolutionary movement identifies their roots and the necessary measures to take. Together with the people, the Party and the NPA pinpoint and oppose the evil purposes of the reactionary forces inciting these wars for their own benefit.

Progressive *bodong*. The revolutionary movement



Conflict in the Middle East

US and Israel reap widespread condemnation

The Israeli government's ruthlessness against the Palestinian people can no longer be endured even by many elements of its armed forces. In September, 27 pilots of the Israeli Defense Forces defied their officers' orders to resume bombing Palestinian communities. They condemned the death of a hundred Palestinian civilians as a result of recent bombings carried out by their fel-

low soldiers. In response, the Israeli government pushed for their dismissal and charged them with mutiny and aiding terrorists.

Earlier, on September 20, the United Nations General Assembly had denounced the Israeli government's plan to forcibly oust Yasser Arafat, president of the Palestine Authority and leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Statements by a number of Israeli

government and military leaders calling for the Palestinian leader's assassination also reaped broad condemnation from various parts of the world.

There is growing criticism of the violent Israeli occupation of Palestine and the blatant support it is getting from US imperialism. On September 27, huge protest actions were simultaneously launched in various countries. Up

recognizes and respects indigenous mores, including the *bodong*. The progressive aspects of these indigenous mores are encouraged, developed, and imbued with revolutionary content. Among such progressive aspects are the concepts that ensure that any serious injustice does not go unpunished, that conflicts should be resolved to bring about peace, that the environment must be protected, and that land and other natural resources are collectively owned by all and not just by a few. The negative aspects of indigenous customs are repudiated. The revolutionary movement recognizes that the obligation of tribes under the *bodong* to launch war against opposing tribes is a negative aspect of *binodngan* tradition, and must therefore be eradicated. Instead of fighting with each other, the revolutionary movement encourages tribes to redirect their struggle against the common enemy of the national minorities—the reactionary state and the reactionary ruling classes that exploit and oppress them.

Although many vestiges of the primitive forms and means of the *bodong* remain, the ancient or traditional *bodong*, which existed before the semicolonial and semifeudal system permeated the entire country, has for the most part been eradicated. In *binodngan* areas where reactionary control and influence on the issue of tribal war and *bodong* still prevail, a distorted *bodong* exists. In places where the leadership and influence of the revolutionary movement are already predominant, the Party and the NPA actively influence and guide the formation of *bodong*. They adjust to the vestiges of primitive *bodong* forms and processes and develop them towards becoming a new type of *bodong* that is more progressive, democratic and patriotic.

The new type of *bodong* upholds the interests of the exploited and oppressed masses of the people and unites the tribes towards achieving the class-based solidarity of the oppressed and exploited against the enemies of the Filipino people. Together with the struggle for self-determination, the new type of *bodong* advances the struggle for national freedom and democracy. It is not limited to two or three *binodngan* tribes, but involves the broadest number of tribes. It practices a progressive democracy—it does not limit decision-making to a handful of *pangat* or tribal leaders but expands it to include the majority of the tribe. In particular, the exploited and oppressed, as well as women and youth, have strong voices in decision-making and their interests are given the biggest weight. The *bodong* of a new type is firmly linked to the tribespeople's participation in advancing people's war.

There is a wealth of lessons to be reaped from the experience of forging stronger and broader links among tribes through the help of the new type of *bodong*, such as the multilateral and extensive *bodong* involving the various Kalinga and Bontoc tribes against the Chico Dam Project during the Marcos dictatorship.

The extensive *bodong* also forges people's unity against the entry of foreign mining corporations, commercial logging and other businesses that seize and wreak havoc on the lands, natural resources, livelihood and welfare of the national minorities. With the greater unity achieved by the *binodngan* people, they are able to train their weapons at their class enemies and the reactionary state, and not against their fellow oppressed and exploited.

AB

to 123,000 people demonstrated in various key cities, including London, where more than a hundred thousand participated.

Despite all this, Israel and its imperialist master maintain their bullying stance. On October 5, Israeli troops rained bombs on the village of Ain-as-Saheb in Syria where Palestinian refugees live, claiming that the area was a terrorist lair. Despicably, the US even defended Israel's dastardly act.

Prior to this, US forces in Iraq had repeatedly violated Syrian territory by flying aircraft in the country's airspace without permission. American soldiers also shot dead two Syrian civilians who were crossing into Iraq to visit relatives. According to a Syrian official, the US actions seemed aimed at provoking war.

Meanwhile, to appease Muslims especially in the Middle East, Bush commissioned a 13-man group led by Edward P. Djerejian, a former US ambassador to Israel and Syria, to look into ways of promoting the image of the US among Muslims.

According to Djerejian's report issued on October 2, the US must be more aggressive in its propaganda efforts in countries with predominantly Muslim populations. The report, however, made no mention of the US' exploitative and oppressive policies—which lie at the root of seething anti-US sentiments in these countries.

5 enemy forces killed in Misamis Occidental firefight
TWO soldiers and three CAFGU elements were killed when Red fighters under the New People's Army Misamis Occidental Front Operational Command (MOFOC) encountered elements of the Alpha Coy of the Philippine Army's 5th IB and the 34th Military Intelligence Company in Barangay Manalac, Sapang Dalaga on October 2.

The guerrillas, who first sighted the approaching soldiers, immediately maneuvered and fired on them.

In a statement on October 4, CPP-NPA Western Mindanao spokesperson Ismael Marte said that the number of casualties inflicted by the NPA on the enemy demonstrates the Red commanders and fighters' high morale and firm unity even in the face of defensive situations and attacks by a larger number of enemy forces. Marte also refuted a report from the 101st Bde to the media claiming that 12 Red fighters were slain in the fighting.

5 SOT troops killed in ambushes in Albay and Isabela

FIVE troops belonging to Special Operations Teams (SOT) of the Philippine Army were killed in two separate ambushes by the NPA in Albay and Isabela in the last week of September.

In Albay, four SOT elements under the 31st IB were killed in an ambush by the New People's Army (NPA) in Barangay Oma-oma, Ligao City on September 28. They were on a "barangay immersion" activity—part of the SOT's counter-insurgency operations in the barrio—when Red fighters ambushed them at around 3:30 p.m. The sergeant that headed the the SOT as well as three other soldiers were killed. The Red fighters seized seven M16 rifles, ammunition and other military equipment from the soldiers.

Earlier, a soldier was killed and another seriously wounded in an NPA sniping operation against an SOT of the 502nd Bde in Isabela on September 23. The soldiers were on a military operation in Barangay Villa Bello, Jones when the Red fighters attacked.

Government employees protest denial of benefits

GOVERNMENT employees are up in arms against the leadership and management of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) for having squandered their hard-earned savings. Since May, the institution has temporarily stopped extending loans and providing benefits and pensions to GSIS members due to bankruptcy.

At first, the GSIS management claimed that an ongoing restructuring of their system was the reason for the delay in extending loans and giving out pensions. Lately, it admitted that the GSIS lacks the funds because of the alleged failure of other government departments to remit funds for the benefits and pensions of their employees.

Government employees are demanding that benefits be provided immediately, that previous lending processes be immediately restored, that the collection of higher contributions be stopped, that the GSIS leadership be investigated and charged, and that employees be represented in the institution's board of directors.

Monument for revolutionary martyrs to be erected in Iloilo
A monument for the martyrs and heroes of the struggle against the US-Marcos

dictatorship will be erected at the Plaza Libertad in Iloilo City. It will serve as a memorial to up to 300 men and women from the workers', peasants', students' and other sectors' ranks who gave up their lives in the struggle against the fascist dictatorship.

Around a hundred relatives and friends of the martyrs, including members of human rights organizations, attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the monument on September 21, the 31st anniversary of the declaration of martial law.

The project was initiated by the Panay Alliance-KARAPATAN, the Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainee Laban sa Detensyon at para sa Amnestiya and the Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace.

Guingona, Legarda bolt administration party

SEN. Loren Legarda, Lakas party vice president for the Visayas and Vice President Teofisto Guingona, the party president, bolted their party one after the other on October 1 and 2. Both of them cited the incompatibility of their principles and stand with the Arroyo regime's existing policies.

Guingona has long been opposed to the Arroyo regime's puppet, fascist and antipeople policies. With his departure from the Lakas party, he may now openly criticize the regime. He has, in fact, criticized Arroyo's regime for its failure to carry out the promised reforms when a popular uprising catapulted Arroyo to Malacañang.

The two party leaders left amid Arroyo's preparations to run for president in 2004, contrary to her pledge on December 30, 2002.

The departure of the two leaders is a positive step in the overall indictment of the Arroyo regime. Based on their positive stand on issues, it would be better for Guingona and Legarda not to join any opposition party that is as rotten, opportunist and antipeople as the one that they had left behind.

It would be better for the two leaders to link up with the progressive and democratic forces who are at the forefront of the principled struggle on meaningful issues against the ruling regime and system.

The CPP anticipates that more Lakas members will follow Guingona and Legarda's example of fearlessly criticizing and exposing cases of corruption, puppetry, militarism and other antipeople measures involving Malacañang.

Arroyo, first-class US citizen-Ambassador Ricciardone

BECAUSE of President Arroyo's all-out puppetry to the US, she may now be regarded as a citizen of that country. This is exactly what US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone said in front of the Foreign Correspondents' Association of the Philippines (FOCAP) on October 1. According to the ambassador, Arroyo is "a first-class citizen of the US...".

2 soldiers who defected from the AFP face the media

The two soldiers who bolted the AFP last August were formally presented to the media on October 5. PFC Boboy Abduhasad and Cpl. Edward Quirante of the 29th IB attended a press conference called by NDF-Mindanao spokesperson Jorge Madlos, to refute AFP claims that they had been killed by the NPA.

Abduhasad and Quirante deserted last August 7 in San Luis, Agusan del Sur and surrendered nine high-powered rifles to the NPA. They brought with them the CAFGU squad that they led.

Reyes, Corpus have new positions

THE two officials who were recently forced to resign due to involvement in cases of fascism and corruption have been given promotions.

President Arroyo appointed former Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes ambassador-at-large for counterterrorism and Gen. Victor Corpus chief of the AFP Civil Relations Service.

The regime has already scuttled the investigation into the cases involving Reyes. Corpus, meanwhile, was very happy with his new position, saying it fits his experience as a psywar expert against the revolutionary movement.

1 million swell ranks of the poor in US

MORE than a million people in the US have joined the ranks of the poor, according to its Bureau of Census on September 26. Based on its definition of poverty, the poverty incidence has increased from 32.9 million to 34.6 million from 2001 to 2002. Likewise, the poverty rate has also risen from 11.7% to 12.1% in the same period. Meanwhile, the earnings of the average family have fallen by 1.1% since 2001.

The growing unemployment rate in the past two years has contributed to the rising poverty incidence and the decline in the income of the American people.